

REMARKS

The above amendments and following remarks are responsive to the Final Office Action mailed April 25, 2007. Upon entry of the above amendments, Claims 1, 9 and 15 will have been amended, and claims 18-21 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 5-12, 15 and 22 will be pending. Claims 6, 8-11 and 15 have been withdrawn. No new matter has been introduced. Entry and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

I. RESPONSE TO THE OBJECTION OF THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification has been objected to on the basis of various informalities.

Regarding the Examiner's request for clarification as to the hardness scale, the Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand the particular degrees to reflect, for example, shore hardness. For instance, in the exemplary embodiments, the base portion and the particular portion may be formed of rubber. The specification on page 5 for example states:

In the embodiment, the base portion 8 is formed of NBR rubber having a hardness of 50 to 60 degrees and a thickness of about 2.5 mm. The particular portion 6 is formed of NBR rubber having a hardness of 20 to 40 degrees and a thickness of 2.0 to 4.0 mm. In addition, the particular portion 6 and the base portion 8 are formed integrally with each other by being pressed with a predetermined high pressure and under a predetermined temperature.

In this connection, shore testers are used to test the hardness of rubber. Accordingly, it would be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art that the "hardness" in degrees (or HS) refers to shore hardness. Although this aspect is believed to be understood by one of ordinary skill in view of the specification, the Applicants have amended the specification to facilitate prosecution. No new matter has been added by this change.

The Applicants have further amended the specification to address the Examiner's other concerns noted in the Office Action. Likewise, no new matter has been added by those changes.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection of the specification are respectfully requested.

II. RESPONSE TO THE CLAIM OBJECTIONS:

Claims 1, 9, 15 and 19-21 have been objected to on the basis of various informalities. The Applicants have amended the claims to address the Examiner's concerns.

Concerning the terms "hardness" and "degrees", the Applicants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would understand the particular degrees to reflect, for example, shore hardness as discussed above. As such, to facilitate prosecution, claim 1 has also been amended accordingly. No new matter has been added by these and other changes.

The Applicants have also amended claims 1, 9, and 15 and canceled claims 18-21, to address the Examiner's other concerns noted in the Office Action. Likewise, no new matter has been added by those changes.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection of the claims are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

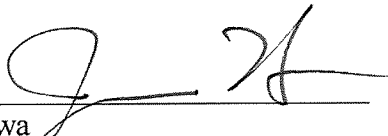
The Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

AUTHORIZATIONS

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for the timely consideration of this amendment, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 0140-4224.

Respectfully submitted,
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